

Message Text

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ACTION IO-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AF-10 ARA-10 EA-10 EUR-12 NEA-10
CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00
PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 NSCE-00 SSO-00 ICAE-00 INRE-00
HA-05 /109 W

-----115732 260041Z /21

O 260036Z AUG 78
FM USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3001
INFO AMEMBASSY KABUL

C O N F I D E N T I A L USUN NEW YORK 03321

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PORG, PDEV, RQ
SUBJECT: PUERTO RICO IN COMMITTEE OF 24

1. AMB MCHENRY AND MISOFF CALLED ON AFGHAN CHARGE
SIDDIQ AUG 25 TO DISCUSS PUERTO RICO IN COMMITTEE OF
24 (C-24). REFERRING TO PAST DISCUSSIONS ON SUBJECT,
MCHENRY NOTED SITUATION IN ONE SENSE WAS THE SAME AS
IN THE PAST -- IT IS BASICALLY A QUESTION FOR DECISION
BY THE PEOPLE OF PUERTO RICO. THIS WAS THE CONTROLLING
FACTOR, AND THIS POSITION HAD BEEN REAFFIRMED BY
PRES CARTER IN HIS JULY 25 PROCLAMATION. (COPY WAS
LEFT WITH SIDDIQ.) NEW FACTOR WAS GOVERNOR'S CALL FOR
STATUS REFERENDUM FOLLOWING 1980 ELECTIONS. MCHENRY
SAID IT WOULD BE A TRAGEDY FOR THE PEOPLE OF PUERTO
RICO AND PERHAPS THE UN IF THERE WERE AN EFFORT ON
THE PART OF THE UN TO DECIDE THE FUTURE OF THE PUERTO
RICAN PEOPLE INSTEAD OF LEAVING THAT DECISION TO THEM.
MOREOVER, IF SUCH A SITUATION WERE TO DEVELOP IT WOULD
BE CONFUSED WITH OTHER ISSUES -- IDEOLOGIES AND
INTERNATIONAL POLITICS. THE AMERICAN PEOPLE WOULD NOT
LOOK KINDLY AT SUCH MISTREATMENT OF THE QUESTION BY THE
UN. HE NOTED THAT THE US HAS ENJOYED AFGHANISTAN'S
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SUPPORT AND UNDERSTANDING ON THIS ISSUE IN THE PAST AND
HE HOPED WE COULD CONTINUE TO DO SO.

2. SIDDIQ POINTED OUT THAT AFGHANISTAN HAS BEEN A MEMBER
OF THE C-24 FOR MANY YEARS AND IS VERY FAMILIAR WITH THE
CASE OF PUERTO RICO. HE NOTED, HOWEVER, THAT THERE HAS
BEEN A CHANGE IN GOVT IN AFGHANISTAN. HE HAS INFORMED

KABUL OF THE BACKGROUND OF THE ISSUE AND REQUESTED INSTRUCTIONS BUT HAS NOT YET RECEIVED THEM. AFTER REFERRING TO AFGHANISTAN'S PAST POSITION, SIDDIQ SAID HE DID NOT KNOW WHAT THE POSITION WOULD BE THIS YEAR. HE WAS AWARE OF THE CONTACTS WE HAD HAD IN BOTH WASHINGTON AND KABUL.

3. MCHENRY REALIZED SIDDIQ WOULD BE BOUND BY HIS INSTRUCTIONS, BUT SAID HE WANTED TO BE SURE THERE WAS FULL UNDERSTANDING OF OUR VIEWS. GOVERNMENTS CHANGE, BUT THE SUBSTANCE OF THIS QUESTION HAS NOT CHANGED, NOR HAS THE RIGHT OF THE PEOPLE OF PUERTO RICO TO DECIDE THEIR OWN FUTURE. THERE WERE PLANS FOR A NEW STATUS REFERENDUM AND IT WAS IMPORTANT THAT THE PEOPLE BE ABLE TO MAKE THEIR CHOICE FREELY AND OPENLY. IT WOULD BE GOOD TO HAVE PROVISIONS TO ENSURE THE FAIRNESS OF THE DECISION. MCHENRY CONCLUDED THAT SIDDIQ WAS FAMILIAR WITH THE QUESTION AND HE THOUGHT WITH THE UNDERLYING ISSUES AS WELL.

4. SIDDIQ SAID HIS GOVT REALIZED THAT THIS WAS A VERY SENSITIVE ISSUE FOR THE US. AFGHANISTAN, HE SAID, AS A MATTER OF PRINCIPLE HAS ALWAYS SUPPORTED THE RIGHT OF THE PEOPLE TO SELF-DETERMINATION AND TO DETERMINE THEIR FUTURE. MCHENRY SAID HIS CONCERN RELATED TO HOW PRINCIPLES WERE IMPLEMENTED. HE WAS CONCERNED THAT THERE WOULD BE AN EFFORT TO HAVE THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY DECIDE FOR

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THE PEOPLE.

5. SIDDIQ SAID HE WOULD TRANSMIT OUR VIEWS TO HIS GOVT AND HOPED TO RECEIVE INSTRUCTIONS SOON. HE AGREED TO KEEP IN TOUCH WITH MCHENRY.

6. COMMENT: SIDDIQ, WHO HAS BEEN AT THE AFGHAN MISSION FOR 5 YEARS, WAS VERY FRIENDLY AND VERY LIKELY WOULD BE PERSONALLY DISPOSED TO BE RESPONSIVE TO OUR WISHES. WE DOUBT, HOWEVER, THAT HE IS IN A POSITION TO INFLUENCE THE GOA'S DECISION AND WILL PROBABLY SIMPLY REPORT OUR APPROACH FACTUALLY AND AWAIT INSTRUCTIONS. YOUNG

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: COMMITTEE MEETINGS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 26 aug 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978USUNN03321
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780349-0558
Format: TEL
From: USUN NEW YORK
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780819/aaaaapti.tel
Line Count: 106
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 4f27f25a-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION IO
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 03 aug 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1607141
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: PUERTO RICO IN COMMITTEE OF 24
TAGS: PORG, PDEV, RQ, COMMITTEE OF 24
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/4f27f25a-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014